6 OTHER CEQA-MANDATED SECTIONS

6.1 SIGNIFICANT UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

CEQA Section 21100(b)(2)(A) provides that an EIR shall include a detailed statement setting forth "in a separate section: any significant effect on the environment that cannot be avoided if the project is implemented." Accordingly, this section provides a summary of significant and potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed project that cannot be mitigated to less-than-significant levels. Significant unavoidable environmental impacts of the proposed project and cumulative development include:

Impact 4.1.2: Conversion of Farmland to Non-Agricultural Use. The project would involve development of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance with residential land uses. Conversion of farmland to urban uses would be a significant impact.

No feasible mitigation is available to mitigate the loss of prime farmland or the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

Impact 4.10-3: Vehicular Site Access and Onsite Circulation Impacts. Proposed vehicular circulation routes for the project would adequately serve the onsite housing units. The addition of a project roadway as a new leg could result in potential operational and safety problems at the Winchester Boulevard/Forest Avenue (east) intersection, if the signal remains in its current configuration. This would be a potentially significant impact.

Mitigation recommended in the EIR, Mitigation Measure 4.10-3, would reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure 4.10-3: Vehicular Site Access and Onsite Circulation Impacts. The project developers shall coordinate with the City of Santa Clara Public Works Department and the City of San Jose Public Works Department to re-design the traffic signal control of the Forest Avenue (west) intersection with Winchester Boulevard. The redesign could include restricting this intersection to right-turns only (Exhibit 4-11a) so that the developments northerly roadway becomes the west approach to the modified intersection. The project driveway could then be accommodated at the Winchester Boulevard/Forest Avenue (east) intersection in a more typical configuration with fewer conflicting turning movements. With this modification, all of the existing traffic that is currently turning left at the Winchester Boulevard/Forest Avenue (west) intersection would be redirected to other routes, including the intersections of Winchester Boulevard with Pruneridge Avenue/Hedding Street and Winchester Boulevard with Dorcich Street. Traffic modeling for these intersections with the additional project-related trips indicates that all three intersections would operate at acceptable levels. The recommended intersection improvements would result in the Winchester Boulevard intersection with Pruneridge Avenue/Hedding Street continuing to operate at LOS C and D, and intersections of Winchester Boulevard at Forest Avenue (east) and at Dorcich Street are projected to operate at LOS B and C, respectively. An alternate design concept for this

improvement is shown in Exhibit 4.11-b. This design would result in the same operational improvements as the option described above and could be constructed within the existing roadway alignment. The City of San Jose shall approve of the traffic re-design for the signal at the Forest (west)/Winchester intersection.

The following design/operational options to the above mitigation measure could be implemented to mitigate this impact. None of these options would require greater right-of-way access than the above intersection improvement.

- Implement the above intersection improvement, except prohibit left turn access from South Winchester Boulevard to the Burger Barn driveway by extending the roadway median island;

- Implement the above intersection improvement and allow left turn access from South Winchester Boulevard to the Burger Barn driveway, and allow left turn access from Forest Avenue to northbound Winchester Boulevard; and

- Implement the above intersection improvement, except create an additional left-turn lane (i.e., restriping or reconfiguration within existing right-of-way) to allow left turn access from northbound Winchester Boulevard to westbound Forest Avenue.

CUMULATIVE IMPACTS

The project would result in cumulative impacts primarily related to cumulative construction in the local area. These impacts include construction-related noise and stormwater runoff. Most of the project's impacts can be mitigated to a less-than-significant level and therefore, would not contribute to a significant cumulative impact.

Air Quality

The project would result in construction-related PM_{10} emissions. Mitigation has been incorporated into the project to reduce these emissions to a less-than-significant level. However, the air basin is currently in non-attainment for PM_{10} emissions. Therefore, the project's PM_{10} emissions (although reduced by mitigation) would contribute to the continued exceedance of state and federal air quality thresholds. This would be a significant cumulative air quality impact of the project. No additional mitigation is available to reduce this cumulative impact. Therefore, this would be a significant and unavoidable cumulative air quality impact.

Transportation

The project in combination with cumulative development would contribute new vehicle trips to the intersections of Stevens Creek Boulevard/ San Tomas Expressway and Stevens Creek Boulevard/ Monroe Street. These intersections are currently operating at unacceptable levels. Therefore, the project would contribute vehicle trips that would exacerbate existing unacceptable traffic conditions. This would be a significant cumulative impact. Mitigation has been recommended to reduce the project's contribution to the cumulative impact. This

mitigation would include the implementation of planned roadway improvements to the Stevens Creek Boulevard/ San Tomas Expressway by the County and contributions to the fair share funding of separate overlap phase for northbound right turns at the Stevens Creek Boulevard/ Monroe Street intersection. These improvements would reduce the project's cumulative impact to a less-than-significant level. However, because these improvements are under the jurisdiction of the County and the City of San Jose and are not under the control of the City of Santa Clara, it is unknown at this time whether the mitigation would be implemented. Therefore, for purposes of CEQA conclusions, that is treated as a potentially significant and unavoidable impact.

The project in combination with future cumulative development would result in the deterioration of the Level of Service (LOS) of the intersections of Pruneridge Avenue/San Tomas Expressway and Hedding Street/Bascom Avenue under cumulative conditions. Mitigation was recommended that would add an eastbound left-turn lane to the Pruneridge Avenue/San Tomas Expressway intersection and restriping to provide one shared left through turn lane at the Hedding Street/Bascom Avenue intersection (Fehr & Peers 2005a). With implementation of this mitigation, the project's cumulative transportation impact would be reduced to a less-than-significant level. However, because these improvements are in the jurisdiction of the City of San Jose and not under the control of the City of Santa Clara, it is unknown at this time whether the mitigation measure would be implemented. Therefore, for purposes of CEQA conclusions, this is treated as a potentially significant and unavoidable impact.

Agricultural Resources

The project would develop approximately 17 acres of Prime Farmland and Farmland of Statewide Importance for which there are no feasible mitigation measures to reduce this impact to a less-than-significant level. This would be a significant and unavoidable cumulative impact.

6.2 GROWTH-INDUCING IMPACTS

CEQA Section 21100(b)(5) specifies that the growth-inducing impacts of a project must be addressed in an EIR. State CEQA Guidelines Section 15126(d) states that a proposed project is growth-inducing if it could "foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment." Included in the definition are projects that would remove obstacles to population growth. Examples of growth-inducing actions include developing water, wastewater, fire, or other types of service areas in previously unserved areas, extending transportation routes into previously undeveloped areas, and establishing major new employment opportunities.

The proposed project would not foster economic growth as no long-term employment opportunities would be created by the proposed project. The project would generate only limited short-term additional employment opportunities associated with construction.

The proposed project would not foster population growth in the surrounding area because it would not remove barriers to population growth in the project vicinity. The project would not result in the expansion of services (i.e., water, wastewater, fire) into previously unserved areas other than the project site. Although the project would construct new housing, the project is infill development in a predominantly residential area. Further, this development was planned for and evaluated in the City's General Plan EIR. Because the project would neither substantially foster growth nor remove obstacles to growth, the project would not be growth inducing.

6.3 SIGNIFICANT IRREVERSIBLE ENVIRONMENTAL CHANGES

CEQA Section 21100(b)(2)(B) provides that an EIR shall include a detailed statement setting forth "in a separate section: any significant effect on the environment that would be irreversible if the project is implemented." The guidelines offer the following for analyzing the significant irreversible changes of a project:

> Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible because a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

The proposed project would consume electricity and gasoline for operation of stationary equipment and mobile sources (i.e., automobiles, trucks) during construction, but these impacts would be short-term. Short-term construction and long-term operational energy and natural resource consumption is expected to be relatively small, and would not exceed the capacity of energy suppliers to meet local demand. Construction activities would not result in inefficient use of energy or natural resources. Construction contractors selected would use best available engineering, construction practices and equipment. Because the project would not result in the substantial short- or long-term consumption of energy or natural resources, these potential irreversible changes would not be significant.

The proposed project would result in the conversion of agricultural land to urban residential land uses. As described in Section 6.1, Significant Unavoidable Impacts, this would be a significant and unavoidable irreversible environmental change.